

REMARKS

The claims have been amended to resolve an issue raised by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Also, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the thickness of the film is at most 60 μm based on the disclosure near the bottom of page 5, and claims 10, 11 and 12 have been canceled accordingly. Also, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the polymer film is a cellulose triacetate film based on, e.g., the disclosure on page 8 in the specification.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested.

Interview with Examiner

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the personal interview held with Applicant's representative on January 9, 2008. Applicant believes that the interview was helpful in advancing the prosecution of the present application. A Statement of Substance of Interview is being submitted herewith.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-8 and 10-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

The Examiner's Position

The Examiner's position is basically that the limiting effect of determining the criterion measure as it relates to maximum peeling force and using that value to set the amount of solvent in the film while it is being peeled is unclear. The Examiner considers the lack of clarity appears to result from the fact that it seems at least two distinct and different steps are recited together in the limitation such that the limiting effect is unclear.

In particular, the Examiner indicates that it is unclear how the remaining solvent during peel is less than the remaining solvent when the peel force is at a maximum. The maximum peel force will be applied sometime during the peeling step, and as such, the remaining solvent will be at the criterion level during the peel step.

That is, the Examiner indicates that it appears the criterion determination step is a calibration/control type step, which is performed distinctly, separately, and before the actual peeling step employed to produce the final product film. The criterion appears intended to provide an input value to the process prior to the actual peeling step. However, the limiting effect of this recitation is unclear as currently presented in the claims.

Applicants' Response

While Applicants consider that one skilled in the art would have understood the invention being claimed in the claims prior to the above amendment, to expedite allowance Applicants have amended the claims to further clarify that the criterion determination step is performed distinctly, separately, and before the actual peeling step employed to produce the final product film.

Thus, Applicants submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, has been overcome, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejection

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-8 and 10-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeda et al. (US 2001/0009312) in view of Shibue et al. (US 6,503,581).

In response, Applicant submits initially that the cited art does not teach or suggest, e.g., the specific determining step as recited in the amended claims, and thus the cited art does not teach or suggest the claimed method.

Further, Applicant notes that claim 1 has been amended to recite that the thickness of the film is at most 60 μm , with the corresponding range of the weight percentage of the remaining solvent being recited accordingly. In this regard, Applicant notes that a smaller amount of the remaining solvent is preferable in a thin film, as discussed at pages 21-22 in the specification.

On the other hand, although Shibue et al. (US 6,503,581) discloses various residual solvent ratios in Table 2, especially at a thickness of 120 microns, Applicant does not consider that the relation between the amount of the remaining solvent and the film thickness as in the present invention is taught or suggested.

Thus, Applicant submits that the invention as recited in the amended claims is not obvious, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.


Respectfully submitted,

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